UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/051,560	01/17/2002	Gary M. Sanderson	NORTH-458A/ A-2360	9653

		EXAMINER
7590	01/18/2006	DESHPANDE, KALYAN K

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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3623	

DATE MAILED: 01/18/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

	Application No.	**Applicant(s)**
Office Action Summary	10/051,560	SANDERSON ET AL.
	Examiner	**Art Unit**	
	Kalyan K. Deshpande	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>17 January 2002</u>.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL.**   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-20* is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-20* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *17 January 2002* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *9/4/2002.*

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Introduction

1.   The following is a non-final office action in response to the communications

received on November 7, 2001. Claims 1-14 are now pending in this application.

Information Disclosure Statement

2.   The examiner has reviewed the patents and articles supplied in the Information

Disclosure Statements (IDS) provided on September 4, 2002.

Specification

3.   Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the

disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single

paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that

the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract

on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology

often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The

abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether

there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details. The language should be

clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid

using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The

disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because the abstract exceeds 150

words. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4.   The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that

form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by
> another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent
> granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the
> applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section
> 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States
> only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2)
> of such treaty in the English language.

5.   Claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Northcutt et

al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0126001).

As per claim 1, Northcutt teaches:

A method for processing work requests in a system having a central computer

containing a web server and a plurality of remote computer workstations coupled to

said central computer, said method comprising:

a. an Originator creating a work request at a first of said remote computer

terminals and transmitting it to a first level for approval (see ¶¶ 46, 64, and 65;

where a request for service is submitted by an original requestor.);

b. said first level reviewing said work request and, if approved, transmitting it

to a third level Group Lead for work assignment (see ¶ 65; where a work

management person receives the submitted request for service. The

management person reviews the submitted request and approves or denies the

request. If the request is approved, it is transmitted to a IT manager who assigns

the request to an IT person to perform the request. Both the IT manager and the

IT person have the responsibility of further reviewing the submitted request to approve or deny the request.);

    d. a Facilitator assigned in the preceding step executing said work request (see ¶¶ 65 – 68; where IT personnel are assigned the task of executing the service request.);

    e. said third level Group Lead reviewing work performed by said Facilitators, and transmitting approval to said fourth level if satisfactory (see ¶¶ 75-77; where various compliance officers can review the work done on the service request.);

    h. closing said work request (see ¶ 80; where the status of the service request can be "completed". A closed request is the same as a completed one.).

Northcutt fails to teach:

A second level Review Board reviewing said work request

A fourth level Review Board reviewing work performed by Facilitator

A fifth level reviewing work performed by Facilitator

Northcutt discloses the service request being reviewed by a work management person, an IT manager, and an IT person. Northcutt does not explicitly teach a second review board that reviews the service request after the work management person and the IT manager. It is old and well-known in the art to have additional personnel to review service requests to ensure the service request is approvable and classified and routed properly. The advantages of having additional personnel review the service request are that the service request is fully considered by more personnel and the service request is properly classified and routed. It would have been obvious, at the

time of the invention, for one of ordinary skill in the art to include a second level review

board to the Northcutt system in order to have the service request fully considered by

additional personnel and to have the service request more accurately classified and

routed.

Northcutt also discloses the ability of various compliance officers to monitor the

progress, status, and work completed in the system. Northcutt does not explicitly teach

fourth and fifth level review boards evaluating the work performed by the IT person. It is

old and well-known in the art to have additional personnel review the work completed by

an IT person to ensure the work performed is satisfactory to the request and the

organization. The advantage of having more personnel (fourth and fifth level review

boards) reviewing the work performed is that a more accurate review of the work

performed can be assessed. It would have been obvious, at the time of the invention,

for one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate fourth and fifth level review boards to the

Northcutt system in order to have more accurate review and evaluation of the work

performed by the IT person.

As per claim 2, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 1 wherein said work request is disapproved, notifying

said Originator by email through said computer system and canceling said work

request (see ¶ 65; where the work management person can deny a service request

from original requestor. The original requestor receives an email from the work

management person with the option of changing the quest.).

As per claim 3, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 1 further including the step of transmitting an email message to said Originator each time said work request is approved (see ¶¶ 68, 72, and 74; where the request for service summary link is sent back to the original requestor. The service summary link is emailed to the original requestor each time the status of the service request is changed. Furthermore, an interface exists where the original requestor can view the status of all requests for service.).

As per claim 4, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 3 wherein said email message includes a hot link to a main menu of said process, thereby providing access to a form for approval of said work request (see ¶ 75; where the original requestor is provided with a link to sign off on a request for service.).

As per claim 5, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 1 further including the step of transmitting an email message to the next level in said process each time said work request is approved (see ¶ 74; where the link to the service request summary is emailed back to the original requestor every time the status of the service request is changed.).

As per claim 6, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 5 wherein said email message includes a hot link to a main menu of said process thereby providing access to a form for approval of said work request (see ¶ 75; where the original requestor is provided with a link to sign off on a request for service.).

As per claim 7, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in Claim 1, wherein Originator can add comments to existing

work requests and change the status to existing service requests (see ¶ 63; where

original requests can add comments to existing service requests and change the

status of the requests.).

Northcutt fails to teach:

said work performed by said Facilitator is not satisfactory, further including the

step of notifying said Facilitator and said Group Lead.

It is old and well-known in the art to notify service personnel and their supervisors

when the work performed is not satisfactory. The advantage of notifying the service

personnel that the work is not satisfactory is that they can return to complete the work in

a satisfactory manner. The advantage of notifying service supervisors is that the

supervisors can ensure that the service personnel complete the work in a satisfactory

manner. It would have been obvious, at the time of the invention, for one of ordinary

skill in the art to incorporate the notification of service personnel and their group leads

when the work performed is not satisfactory in order for the personnel to complete the

work in a satisfactory manner.

As per claim 8, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in Claim 7, further including said Group Lead and employees

work said request until the status of the request is complete (see ¶ 80; where the

status of a complete service request is "complete".).

Northcutt fails to teach:

reworking said work request until work is approved.

It is old and well-known in the art to rework a service request until the work is approved. The advantage of reworking a service request until the work is approved is that it improves customer satisfaction. It would have been obvious, at the time of the invention, to rework work requests until the work is approved in order to improve customer satisfaction.

As per claim 9, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 1 further including a main menu displayed for a user to interactively select a step of said process (see ¶ 53; where users enter the system through a main menu and select links to each steps they need.).

As per claim 10, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 10 further including displaying a screen representing an approval form in response to selection of a step of said process from said main menu (see ¶¶ 53 and 54; where users can select the interface including requestor reports where the user can view which requests need final signoff.).

As per claim 11, Northcutt teaches:

A method for processing work requests in a system having a central computer containing a web server and a plurality of remote computer workstations coupled to said central computer, each of said work stations including web browser software, said method comprising:

a. an Originator creating a work request at a first of said remote computer terminals and transmitting it to a first level for approval (see ¶¶ 46, 64, and 65; where a request for service is submitted by an original requestor.);

b. said first level reviewing said work request and, if approved, transmitting it

to a third level Group Lead for work assignment (see ¶ 65; where a work

management person receives the submitted request for service. The

management person reviews the submitted request and approves or denies the

request. If the request is approved, it is transmitted to a IT manager who assigns

the request to an IT person to perform the request. Both the IT manager and the

IT person have the responsibility of further reviewing the submitted request to

approve or deny the request.);

d. a Facilitator assigned in the preceding step executing said work request

(see ¶¶ 65 – 68; where IT personnel are assigned the task of executing the

service request.);

e. said third level Group Lead reviewing work performed by said Facilitators,

and transmitting approval to said fourth level if satisfactory (see ¶¶ 75-77; where

various compliance officers can review the work done on the service request.);

h. closing said work request (see ¶ 80; where the status of the service request

can be "completed". A closed request is the same as a completed one.).

Northcutt fails to teach:

A second level Review Board reviewing said work request

A fourth level Review Board reviewing work performed by Facilitator

A fifth level reviewing work performed by Facilitator

Claim 11 recites limitations already addressed by the rejection of claim 1;

therefore the same rejection applies to this claim.

As per claim 12, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 11 wherein each of said email messages includes a hot link to a main menu of said process, which provides access to a form for approval of said work request (see ¶ 65; where the work management person can approve or deny a service request from original requestor using links in the email. The original requestor receives an email from the work management person with the option of changing the quest.).

As per claim 13, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 11 wherein each of said email messages includes a hot link to a main menu of said process, which provides access to a form for rejecting said work request (see ¶ 65; where the work management person can approve or deny a service request from original requestor using links in the email. The original requestor receives an email from the work management person with the option of changing the quest.).

As per claim 14, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 11 wherein a work request is rejected, further including the step of notifying said Originator by email through said computer system and canceling said work request (see ¶ 65; where the work management person can deny a service request from original requestor. The original requestor receives an email from the work management person with the option of changing the quest.).

As per claim 15, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in Claim 11, wherein Originator can add comments to existing work requests and change the status to existing service requests (see ¶ 63; where original requests can add comments to existing service requests and change the status of the requests.).

Northcutt fails to teach:

said work performed by said Facilitator is not satisfactory, further including the step of notifying said Facilitator, said Originator and said Group Lead.

Claim 15 recites limitations already addressed by the rejection of claim 7; therefore the same rejection applies to this claim.

As per claim 16, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in Claim 15, further including said Group Lead and employees work said request until the status of the request is complete (see ¶ 80; where the status of a complete service request is "complete".).

Northcutt fails to teach:

reworking said work request until the work is approved.

Claim 16 recites limitations already addressed by the rejection of claim 8; therefore the same rejection applies to this claim.

As per claim 17, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 11 further including a main menu displayed for a user to interactively select a step of said process (see ¶ 53; where users enter the system through a main menu and select links to each steps they need.).

As per claim 18, Northcutt teaches:

A method for processing work requests in a system having a central computer containing a web server and a plurality of remote computer workstations coupled to said central computer, each of said work stations including web browser software and said computer executing web server software, said method comprising:

a. an Originator creating a work request at a first of said remote computer terminals and transmitting it to a first level for approval (see ¶¶ 46, 64, and 65; where a request for service is submitted by an original requestor.);

b. said first level reviewing said work request and, if approved, transmitting it to a third level Group Lead for work assignment (see ¶ 65; where a work management person receives the submitted request for service. The management person reviews the submitted request and approves or denies the request. If the request is approved, it is transmitted to a IT manager who assigns the request to an IT person to perform the request. Both the IT manager and the IT person have the responsibility of further reviewing the submitted request to approve or deny the request.);

d. a Facilitator assigned in the preceding step executing said work request (see ¶¶ 65 – 68; where IT personnel are assigned the task of executing the service request.);

e. said third level Group Lead reviewing work performed by said Facilitators, and transmitting approval to said fourth level if satisfactory (see ¶¶ 75-77; where various compliance officers can review the work done on the service request.);

h. closing said work request (see ¶ 80; where the status of the service request

can be "completed". A closed request is the same as a completed one.).

Northcutt fails to teach:

A second level Review Board reviewing said work request

A fourth level Review Board reviewing work performed by Facilitator

A fifth level reviewing work performed by Facilitator

Claim 18 recites limitations already addressed by the rejection of claim 1;

therefore the same rejection applies to this claim.

As per claim 19, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 18 wherein each of said email messages includes a hot

link to a main menu of said process, which provides access to a form for approval of

said work request (see ¶ 65; where the work management person can approve or

deny a service request from original requestor using links in the email. The original

requestor receives an email from the work management person with the option of

changing the quest.).

As per claim 20, Northcutt teaches:

The method as in claim 18 wherein each of said email messages includes a hot

link to a main menu of said process, which provides access to a form for rejecting

said work request (see ¶ 65; where the work management person can approve or

deny a service request from original requestor using links in the email. The original

requestor receives an email from the work management person with the option of

changing the quest.).

Conclusion

6.   The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to

applicant's disclosure. The following are pertinent to the current invention, though not

relied upon:

Schwartz et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6813278) teaches system and method for

submitting a service request for local service management.

Zey et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6611275) a method for communicating and

scheduling maintenance requests.

Gabbita et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6349238) teaches a system and method of

managing service orders in a workflow system.

Willcox et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0161859) teaches a workflow

system in a service provider environment.

Gullotta et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0156904) teaches a system and

method for managing resources in a workflow system for providing service requests.

Hussain (Hussain, Md Mostaque; "Research and Concepts: Acitivity-Based Cost

Management in Financial Services Industry", *Managing Service Quality*, 2001, pp. 213-

224) teaches planning tools and decision supporting tools for providing new services.

Chen et al. (Chen, Graham; Kong, Qinzheng; Etheridge, Jaon; Foster, Paul;

"Integrated TMN Service Management", *Journal of Network and Systems Management,*

December 1, 1999, pp. 469-493) teaches service deployment and management in the

global telecommunications industry.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kalyan K. Deshpande whose telephone number is (571) 272-5880. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

kkd

SUSANNA M. DIAZ
PRIMARY EXAMINER

AU 3623